

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are pending. Claims 9, 11, 13, 17-18 and 20 have been amended. In view of the following, all pending claims are in condition for allowance. If, after considering this response, the Examiner does not agree that all of the claims are allowable, he is requested to schedule a teleconference with the Applicants' attorney to further the prosecution of the application.

Rejection of claims 9-11 and 13-20 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Menniti (US 4,723,191)

Claim 9

Claim 9, as amended, recites a first delay element coupled to the switch and operable to disable the switch from conducting current at a first predetermined time after the polarity reverses, and a second delay element coupled to the switch and operable to enable the switch to conduct current at a second predetermined time after the polarity returns to the predetermined polarity, the second predetermined time being shorter than the first predetermined time.

For example, referring, e.g., to FIGS. 2 and 4 of the present application, a switch 81 is operable to conduct a current to a first node 32 of a power supply Vbat when the first node 32 has a predetermined polarity relative to a second node 31 of the power supply Vbat. A first delay element 88 is coupled to the switch 81 and is operable to disable the switch 81 from conducting current at a first predetermined time after the polarity reverses. A second delay element 86 is coupled to the switch 81 and is operable to enable the switch 81 to conduct current at a second predetermined after the polarity returns to the predetermined polarity. It should be noted that the second predetermined time (from the second delay element 86) is shorter than the first predetermined time (from the first delay element 88) (paragraph [61]). Specifically, the second predetermined time is preferably at least ten times shorter than the first predetermined time (paragraph [61]). This is especially desirable due to the required speeds for the starting/restarting of the control circuit 1 (paragraph [61]).

Menniti, on the other hand, does not teach a first delay element coupled to the switch and operable to disable the switch from conducting current at a first predetermined time after the polarity reverses, and a second delay element coupled to the switch and operable to enable the switch to conduct current at a second predetermined time after the polarity returns to the predetermined polarity, the second predetermined time being shorter than the first predetermined time. In fact, after reviewing Menniti in its entirety, the Applicants' attorney is unable to find any mention of a second delay element operable to enable the switch T1 to conduct current at a second predetermined time after the polarity returns to normal. Furthermore, the Applicants' attorney is unable to find any mention of a specific relationship between a first predetermined time and a second predetermined time, where the second predetermined time is shorter than the first predetermined time. Therefore, Menniti does not satisfy all of the limitations of claim 9.

Claims 13, 17-18 and 20

Claims 13, 17-18 and 20, as amended, are patentable for reasons similar to those recited above in support of the patentability of claim 9.

Claims 10-11, 14-16 and 19

Claims 10-11, 14-16 and 19 are patentable by virtue of their respective dependencies from claims 9, 13 and 18.

**Rejection of claim 12 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Menniti
in view of Ngo et al. (US 6,525,515)**

Claim 12 is patentable by virtue of its dependency from claim 9.

Rejection of claims 1-6 and alternatively 9-20 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ngo in view of Menniti

Claim 1

Claim 1 recites a device for protecting a circuit against a polarity reversal of a connection to a D.C. power supply, the device comprising a first means for turning off a switch with a turn-off delay, and a second means for turning on the switch with a turn-on delay shorter than the turn-off delay.

For example, referring, e.g., to FIGS. 2 and 4 and paragraphs 53-61 of the present application, a device 8 protects a circuit 1 against a polarity reversal of a connection to a D.C. power supply Vbat. The device 8 comprises a first means 88 for turning off a switch 81 with a turn-off delay, and a second means 86 for turning on the switch 81 with a turn-on delay shorter than the turn-off delay. It should be noted that the turn-on delay is preferably at least ten times shorter than the turn-off delay (paragraph [61]). This is especially desirable due to the required speeds for the starting/restarting of the control circuit 1 (paragraph [61]).

As already discussed above, Menniti fails to mention a second means for turning on the switch T1 with a predetermined turn-on delay. Furthermore, Menniti fails to mention a specific relationship between a turn-on delay and a turn-off delay, where the turn-on delay is shorter than the turn-off delay.

Similarly, Ngo does not teach a device for protecting a circuit against a polarity reversal of a connection to a D.C. power supply, the device comprising a first means for turning off a switch with a turn-off delay, and a second means for turning on the switch with a turn-on delay shorter than the turn-off delay. In fact, Ngo does not even teach a device for protecting a circuit against a polarity reversal of the power supply. Instead, Ngo teaches control electronics 44 that is powered by the input supply 42, and thus would not even function if the polarity of the input supply 42 is reversed (FIG. 2). As a result, Ngo and the present application relate to totally different fields. Furthermore, the turning-off of the switching element N1 is quicker than the turning-on (auto-restart) of the switching element N1 (col. 4, lines 30-59). This is completely opposite to the limitations of claim 1.

Therefore, not only is there no motivation to combine the teachings of Ngo and Menniti, but the combination of Ngo and Menniti would not even satisfy all of the limitations of claim 1.

Claims 5-6

Claims 5-6 are patentable by virtue of their dependencies from claim 1.

Claim 9

Claim 9, as amended, is patentable for reasons similar to those recited above in support of the patentability of claims 1 and 9.

Claims 13, 17-18 and 20

Claims 13, 17-18 and 20, as amended, are patentable for reasons similar to those recited above in support of the patentability of claim 9.

Claims 10-12, 14-16 and 19

Claims 10-12, 14-16 and 19 are patentable by virtue of their respective dependencies from claims 9, 13 and 18.

CONCLUSION

In light of the foregoing, claims 1-20 are in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested.

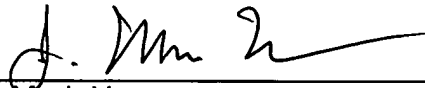
Applicants submit that this response has not generated any additional claim fees. Should additional claim fees be required, please charge them to Deposit Account No. 07-1897. Should any other additional fees be required, please charge them to Deposit Account No. 07-1897.

While every attempt has been made to provide a *bona fide* response to the referenced office action, if the Examiner finds this response deficient in any way, he is respectfully requested to contact applicant's attorney of record by telephone, at (425) 455-5575.

Dated this 28th day of May, 2008.

Respectfully submitted,

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